

25th Anniversary Symposium

Integrating the Access and Functional Needs of the Whole Community… Before, During, and After Disasters



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FEMA Mission

"FEMA's mission is to **support** our citizens and first responders to ensure that as a nation we **work together** to build, sustain, and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards."





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"It is time children, people with disabilities or any other segment of our communities who have traditionally been underserved, to be more fully and consistently integrated into preparedness and planning efforts at every level of government."

"My experience tells me if we wait and plan for people with disabilities after we write the basic plan, we fail."

Craig Fugate







Office of Disability Integration and Coordination (ODIC)



Mission Statement

The Office of Disability Integration and Coordination leads FEMA's commitment to achieving whole community emergency management, inclusive of individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs, by providing guidance, tools, methods and strategies to establish equal physical, program and effective communication access.





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Federal Laws Prohibiting Discrimination in Emergency Programs on the Basis of Disability

- Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990
- Stafford Act of 1988
- Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006
- Fair Housing Act Amendments of 1988
- Architectural Barriers Act of 1968
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1975
- Telecommunications Act of 1996
- Twenty-first Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act of 2010





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Federal Authorities Apply to Many Aspects of Emergency Management

- Preparation
- Training and Exercises
- Notification
- Evacuation and transportation
- Sheltering
- First aid and medical services
- Temporary lodging and housing
- Transition back to the community
- Clean up
- Recovery
- Mitigation
- Other disaster-related programs, services, and activities





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FEMA Strategic Plan – 2014-2018

"FEMA will work with the whole community to ensure equal access to disaster services and to meet the functional needs of all individuals without discrimination."





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Post Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act - 2006

“The Disability Coordinator shall report directly to the Administrator, in order to ensure that the needs of individuals with disabilities are being properly addressed in emergency preparedness and disaster relief. The Disability Coordinator shall be responsible for providing guidance and coordination on matters related to individuals with disabilities in emergency planning requirements and relief efforts in the event of a natural disaster, act of terrorism, or other man-made disaster…”





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National Disaster Recovery Framework – November 2011

"Care must be taken to identify and eradicate social and institutional barriers that hinder or preclude individuals with disabilities and others in the community historically subjected to unequal treatment from full and equal enjoyment of the programs, goods, services, activities, facilities, privileges, advantages and accommodations provided."





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National Preparedness Frameworks – July 2014

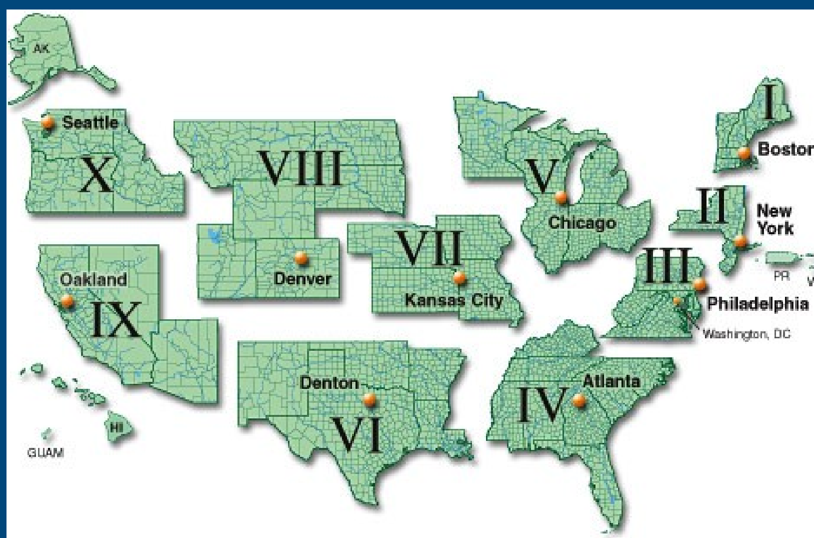
"All activities in support of the National Preparedness Goal… must be consistent with all pertinent statutes and policies, particularly those involving privacy and civil and human rights, such as the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Civil Rights Act of 1964."





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Regional Disability Integration Specialists



Responsible for ensuring that the access and functional needs and requirements of individuals with disabilities are being properly included and addressed in all aspects of emergency preparedness and disaster response, recovery, and mitigation





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Disability Integration Cadre Force Strength

	Force Strength
Current Force Strength	70
2016 Force Strength	285





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DHS Access and Functional Needs Definition

- Circumstances that are met for providing physical, programmatic, and effective communication access to the whole community by accommodating individual requirements through universal accessibility and/or specific actions or modifications
- Includes assistance, accommodation or modification for mobility, communication, transportation, safety, health maintenance, etc.; need for assistance, accommodation or modification due to any situation (temporary or permanent) that limits an individual's ability to take action in an emergency
- When physical, programmatic, and effective communication access is not universally available, individuals may require additional assistance in order to take protective measures to escape to and/or from, access either refuge and/or safety in an emergency or disaster, and/or may need other assistance, accommodations or modifications in an emergency or disaster. This is accomplished through pre-planning by emergency management, first response agencies and other stakeholders or in sheltering or other situations, from notification and evacuation, to sheltering, to return to pre-disaster level of independence.
- Individuals having access and functional needs may include, but are not limited to, individuals with disabilities, older adults, and individuals with limited English proficiency, limited access to transportation, and/or limited access to financial resources to prepare for, respond to, and recover from the emergency.
- Federal civil rights law and policy require nondiscrimination, including on the bases of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, disability, English proficiency, and economic status. Many individuals with access and functional needs are protected by these provisions.





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Access and Functional Needs

- Children and adults with physical, mobility, sensory, intellectual, developmental, cognitive, or mental disabilities
- Older adults
- People with chronic or temporary health conditions
- Women in the late stages of pregnancy
- People with limited English proficiency, low literacy or additional communication needs
- People with very low incomes
- People without access to transportation
- People experiencing homelessness
- Others





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Whole Community

Whole Community

Individuals with Access and Functional Needs

Individuals with Disabilities

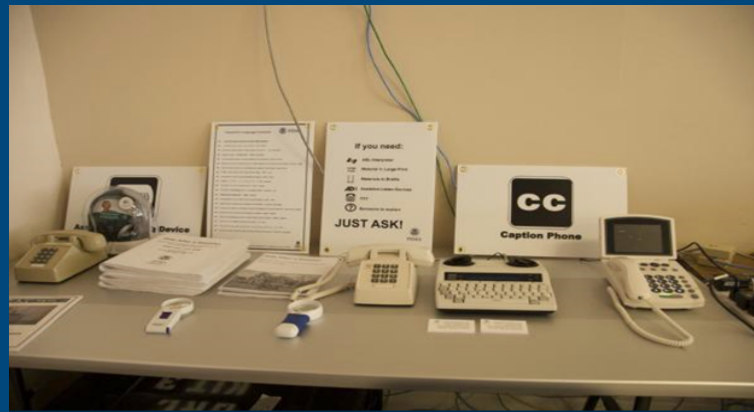




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FEMA Programs













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Promising Practices

- Universal accessibility is “baked in” to all aspects of community development, not an afterthought of annex
- People with disabilities are “at the table” and their role is real, not tokenized
- Qualified people with disabilities serve in leadership roles







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Making accommodations is reactive, whereas universal design is proactive







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“Nothing About Us, Without Us”





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Language Influences Behavior

- “Access and functional needs” NOT “special needs”
- “Whole community” NOT “special populations”
- “Disproportionate impact” NOT “vulnerable or at-risk populations”
- “Individuals” NOT “special populations”
- Planning “with” NOT planning “for”





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Memoranda of Agreements

Memoranda of Agreements (MOAs) between FEMA and Portlight, NCIL, NDRN,PIOC, Red Cross and others:

MOAs outline the ways in which DHS/FEMA and national disability organizations will collaborate and develop relationships to carry out their respective responsibilities with respect to disaster mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery operations in the event of a natural disaster, act of terrorism or man-made disaster.





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Homeland Security Grants

FEMA FEMA/DHS FY 15 grant guidance "strongly encourages grantees to address how investments will provide equal access and increased effectiveness of emergency preparedness planning and response and to increase the involvement of disability inclusion experts as partners across all aspects of emergency management."





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Homeland Security Grants (cont'd)

Fiscal Year 2015 Homeland Security Grant Program Supplemental Resources: People with Disabilities in Disaster Guidance

Examples of Allowable Use of Funds:

- Inclusive meeting practices
- Producing materials and tools
- General population shelter planning, training, equipment and supplies
- Accessible Alert, Warning and Notification systems
- Gap analysis
- Resource tracking
- Cross training
- Analysis and evaluation of potential shelter locations
- Planners
- Neighborhood leadership development





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Integration and Coordination

When communities integrate the access and functional needs of children and adults with and without disabilities in all phases of community-wide emergency management, they strengthen their ability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and





“We Prepare Every Day” PSA

http://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/videos/107818



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